

Chevy Chase Village Public Safety Committee

Minutes of Meeting

December 17, 2012

The Public Safety Committee met on December 17, 2012 at 7:30 pm at the Village Hall. Committee members in attendance were Ollie Davidson, Irwin Pernick and Saul Goodman. Participating by phone was Betty O'Connor. Also in attendance were Chief John Fitzgerald and David Winstead (Board Liaison). A copy of the agenda for the meeting is attached.

Chief Fitzgerald began the meeting by providing a summary of key operational highlights for the Village Police Force. In terms of staffing, the Village Police Force currently has 10 sworn officers (the Chief, the Sergeant, the Corporal and seven officers). Three officers currently work on the night shift. The Communications Center currently has five dispatchers. Doris Lyerly, who has worked in the Communications Center for nearly a decade, will be resigning in January.

Chief Fitzgerald reviewed the following crime statistics for the Village:

Select Reported Crimes 2007-Present						
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012 as of 11/30/12
Assault	1	1	1	0	0	2
Auto Theft & attempts	3	3	3	3	6	2
Burglary & attempts	6	7	6	7	14	3
Larceny & attempts	34	62	63	46	67	94
Robbery	2	0	0	1	0	0

The Chief explained that the biggest crime problem we are currently facing is the nighttime entry of autos. In most instances, these involve unlocked cars.

An important part of the response to this problem will be to educate Village residents to lock their cars at night. Accordingly, beginning in January, the Village Police will be going door-to-door to explain to Village residents the importance of locking cars at night and to address other public safety issues. If Village residents are not home at the time of these visits, the officers will leave a handout emphasizing the importance of leaving on outdoor lights and locking cars at night.

The Village has acquired a bait car to be used to try to help catch individuals who are unlawfully entering cars. It is anticipated that the bait car will be operational in January. **[Chief, Is it OK to mention this in meeting minutes? I don't recall whether the minutes are available to the public, or just to Village residents. Let me know how you think we should handle this.] Minutes are available to the general public. Let's omit reference to this entirely for now; the bait car was**

severely damaged in an auto collision on the day it was picked up, and it is currently being repaired; it will be some time before we have it back, and I don't want the general public to know it is not yet operational.

The Village Police have converted the Durango for use as a police support vehicle.

The Village is working with PEPCO on improving our street lighting. PEPCO will be replacing the existing bulbs in the street lighting with LED bulbs. This should provide much better lighting. Testing of the new bulbs should begin in April 2013 or thereabouts.

The Chief next addressed some police training issues. He explained that the annual in-service training is now complete, and he has increased the frequency of the firearms qualification training for the officers. He has also instituted a program in which the Village officers will be provided with crisis management training to assist them in defusing difficult situations without the use of force if possible. The Chief will be attending two conferences to keep up with best police practices.

As to administrative issues, the Chief noted that (1) the Village and the Chief are no longer parties to the Richard v. Fitzgerald lawsuit; the case was dismissed against them; (2) the Village police had a mock CALEA onsite review in October in preparation for the actual CALEA re-accreditation audit in April 2013, (3) the Village had conducted a public safety satisfaction survey in connection with the upcoming CALEA review (the Chief will share the results at our next meeting), (4) Village police officers are now able to issue electronic tickets, and (5) the laptops in the patrol cars have been replaced and allow our officers to work much more efficiently.

Chief Fitzgerald then provided a quick overview of the upcoming budget review cycle and the public safety budget items. We will be discussing these issues in greater detail at our next meeting, which will be scheduled between January 15 and January 25.

The Committee then (1) discussed and agreed with the Chief's thoughts regarding police firearms [Chief, OK?], yes and (2) began a discussion regarding what the Public Safety Committee might do to address emergency preparedness in the Village.